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# FACTS FOR THE PEOPLE

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CONSIDER THEM WELL.

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MR. MERCIER JUDGED BY HIS RECORD.

NO LONGER A LIBERAL PARTY.

THE NATIONAL PARTY WITH THE REGINA CRY—  
REIGNS SUPREME.

TO THE VICTORS BELONG THE SPOILS.

LET THE PEOPLE ASSERT THEMSELVES.

VOTE FOR GOOD MEN AND TRUE.

FREE SPEECH, JUSTICE TO ALL, AND NO FAVORS.

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GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

FACTS

## FACTS FOR THE PEOPLE.

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### CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.

In his programme of June, 1886, Mr. Mercier advocated immediate and energetic practical steps to improve the financial situation of the Province, so as to *prevent direct taxation*.

In the Speech from the Throne of 1887, it was announced that *the Government had not had time to develop a suitable project for providing the means necessary for the requirements of the situation, and there remained no other resource than to make a loan sufficient to pay all that was justly due.*

Mr. Mercier therefore sought and obtained from the Legislature authorization to borrow three and a half millions of dollars (\$3,500,000), payable in thirty or forty years.

How different was this administrative action upon his part from the declarations that he was continually making, *when not clothed in the responsibilities of office*, will be seen when it is remembered that, during the session of 1885, he proposed, seconded by his present Treasurer, Mr. Shehyn, the great financial authority of the Liberal party,

*"That this House is ready to vote the necessary supplies to Her Majesty, but regrets that the Government has not fulfilled its promises by carefully preparing and submitting to the House, at the beginning of the session, practical and sufficient measures to put a stop to the annual deficits which are so seriously augmenting the embarrassments of our financial situation, that the business men of the Province and the taxpayers view with alarm the Government's policy of expedients and of loans, which do not offer any remedy for the present condition of affairs, and allows them, with culpable negligence, to continue and become more aggravated."*

Where, it may be asked, is Mr. Mercier's consistency? In the Speech from the Throne it was distinctly declared that the Gov-

ernment had not had time to devise a system of ECONOMY AND RETRENCHMENT, and that, in consequence, the only thing to do was to rely upon the old policy which he had so vigorously condemned. Months elapsed before that resolution was carried out, during the whole of which *no evidence was forthcoming of inis Mter Mercier's sincerity* in his opposition to borrowing money and in advocacy of financial reforms. For one reason or another [not, as has been amply demonstrated, because of the worthlessness of the Provincial securities, but for reasons best known to the Provincial Premier] our securities were peddled about and, as it were, every effort made by the men trading in them to depreciate their value. No doubt, like Sir Richard Cartwright, who, when as Finance Minister negotiating a loan in England, was *brought face to face with his own declarations as depreciatory of the Canadian credit, Messrs. Shehyn and Mercier were shown both sides of the shield, in their own painting, and found it exceedingly inconvenient to look on this picture and on that.*

The Province, they had said, was ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY, and there was NOTHING FOR IT BUT DIRECT TAXATION. It no doubt took them months to remove the false impressions which they had created, and all this time the affairs of the Province were at a stand-still from lack of funds—at least if Ministerial pretensions were correct as to the pressing need for the replenishment of the Treasury.

THREE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS IS A LARGE  
SUM

to be taken in and absorbed by our province. It is equal to about *four dollars per head of our population*, and is, during the time the loan lasts, A MORTGAGE TO THAT EXTENT UPON THE PROPERTY OF EVERY FARMER, UPON THE STORE OF EVERY MERCHANT, AND AN ANNUAL TAX UPON THE INCOME OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL, HIGH OR LOW, RICH OR POOR, WHO HAPPENS TO LIVE IN THIS PROVINCE. AND THIS BECAUSE MR. MERCIER AND HIS COLLEAGUES COULD NOT OR WOULD NOT FIND TIME TO DEVELOP THEIR MUCH BOASTED POLICY OF ECONOMY AND RETRENCHMENT. Where, it will be asked, does the economy come in? If economies can be effected, by their amount must be measured the constant waste that is still going on, with which and whose remedy the Government are

well acquainted; but are too apathetic to take the necessary action. It might be uncharitable to charge that having obtained the money they will do nothing until it has all been expended, but *appearances are against them*. Conclusions of a most serious character will doubtless be arrived at, when it is borne in mind that about *half of the obligations which Mr. Mercier proposed to cover by the money borrowed are not of a pressing character*. Among those indicated as peremptory are:—

Balance of subsidies granted to certain railway companies before 1866.....	\$ 579,732.25
Payment of the first 35 cents of the money subsidies in conversion of the Land Grant.....	1,084,328.50
Also for the payment of the first 35 cents of the same subsidies.....	464,100.00

How much of this, it may be asked, has been called for since the bill was passed, and for how much of it will demands ever be made upon the country, at any rate for years to come?

*Two millions of dollars for the Government to play with and divert from its contemplated uses, is a very large amount, and its diversion may or may not, constitute an act if not of civil, at least of political criminality.* If the accountant or manager of many a joint stock or private business enterprises were to obtain money under unwarranted pretences and devote it to foreign objects, his usefulness would soon be declared to have gone, and he would be compelled to make way for a more honest and straightforward successor. On the subject of the lack or necessity of the money for these objects, there has only to be quoted the declaration of Mr. Treasurer Shehyn, who, in his last financial statement, said that *of the amount of money grants voted to railways (and as given above) \$579,732 were not due, while \$1,004,320 were not yet due of the land grants to be converted into cash. Moreover there were \$464,100 in land subsidies which might be turned into cash which had not yet been earned.* Here we have no less than \$2,148,180 of the cash for which the Government were more than ordinarily anxious to obtain possession officially declared as not required for the present. Although the above sums would not in the ordinary course of events be required for some years to come, *the Government have deliberately saddled the province with an annual interest of \$85,924.*

To what legitimate object will they put the greater part of the loan? What interest can they draw upon it? To what loss will not the province be put even should they bank it all? That they will bank it there is no fear. *The money will doubtless be put to uses that may seem the best to the Government, in the interest of the party. After them the deluge!* Like the rich man of the story, they and their friends manifestly propose to have a good time spending it, realizing, as every one in the province knows in his heart of hearts, that their day of reckoning is at hand.

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### LIBERALS AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Ever since the Liberals discovered that it was impossible for them either to obtain a majority in the Legislative Council or to induce that body to place itself in antagonism to the majority of the popular assembly, they have sought in every possible way to bring about the abolition of that constitutionally appointed chamber. Time and again have Liberals introduced motions and bills to do away with that house, while, upon the platform, no language has been found by them too strong in which to denounce its uselessness and expense. The Premier himself, in his letter to Hon. Mr. Thibaudeau, had no hesitation in saying that the Legislative Council was dangerous to the best interests of the country and must be abolished. Moreover, it has been charged with being effete and antiquated, and, moreover, peculiarly susceptible to occult and unscrupulous influences. The Liberals gave no uncertain sound on this matter; but *their course, since they have had the opportunity of taking action, has given the lie to their professions.* Almost their first act on coming to office was to stretch their appointing power to its utmost limit, and when that was exhausted, they sought *by intrigue, by bribery and by corruption of the most flagrant description, to induce Legislative Councillors of Conservative profession to resign and give them the opportunity of making appointments, in fact of packing that body with their adherents.* Every one who was deemed in any way approachable was negotiated with, and, to their honour be it said, not a few rejected their proposals with *scorn and indignation.* Office for themselves or their friends, money and personal advantages were held out with liberal hand.



Among the changes which they contrived to bring about was the *resignation of Hon. Mr. Bryson*, who was succeeded by his son, a man of pronounced Liberal views. The practice, however, of thus creating, as it were, a vested family interest in the chamber, cannot be too strongly condemned. *Hon. Mr. Remillard, a Liberal, was induced for reasons of a substantial character, to make way for Hon. Mr. Garneau.* This may, however, be said to have been a family arrangement, except that Mr. Remillard went out at the expense of the public service in which he was provided with a position—the registrarship of Quebec.

In regard to the resignation of the late *Hon. Mr. Savage*, who was succeeded by *Hon. Mr. Ross*, it has been charged that it was a matter of direct bargain and sale, and was in the highest degree a most objectionable transaction, a monetary payment being said to have been one of the considerations. And all this was under the auspices and for the benefit and by the manipulations of the Liberal party of purity and economy. *Then the latest conquest made in the Legislative Council was that by which Hon. Mr. Bresse succeeded Hon. Mr. Gingras.* In this case it has been openly stated that a sum of \$10,000 was the price at which the seat changed hands, \$7,000 for the benefit of the retiring councillor and \$3,000 for a friend of the Government who had negotiated the affair. And yet the Liberal, or, as for the nonce they style themselves, the National party, preach about their purity and the corruption of their opponents. *Where, it may be inquired, does this corruption money come from?* Part of it, unquestionably, from the pockets of those who are called upon to make their contributions to the public revenue, out of which it finds its way by one of the many underground roads which the party have opened.

If the Upper House of the province be, as the Liberal-Nationalists pretend, an unworthy and discreditable institution, *why seek to further corrupt it by the introduction of men who by acts of the most glaring bribery and corruption, have contrived to obtain seats in it?* There is an old legal maxim that the electors should bear in mind, that he who causes an act to be performed legally or otherwise, is responsible for it; "*Qui facit per alium facit per se.*"

### INDEMNITY OF MEMBERS.

Upon numerous occasions the Liberal party pronounced themselves in favour of reducing the sessional indemnity of members to \$500, and in 1878 the indemnity was placed at that figure. In 1884, Messrs. Demers and Barnard proposed that it was not expedient to increase the indemnity from that amount, because the condition of the Provincial finances would not permit of it. For these motions Mr. Mercier, then in opposition, voted; while in 1880 Hon. Mr. Gagnon had not only proposed to do away with the Legislative Council altogether, but that the members of the Assembly should give their services gratuitously. *For this motion, Mr. Mercier, although he then posed as a poor man, recorded his vote;* but in 1885 he opposed Hon. Mr. Taillon's proposal that the indemnity should be fixed at \$600, and no more. By Mr. Shehyn's supplementary estimates of 1887, however, the indemnity was increased to \$800, in which way the National Government of Mr. Mercier augmented the expenses of legislation by \$17,800, although they had gone to the country on the cry of Provincial bankruptcy and the necessity for economy and retrenchment. Here is another manifestation of Ministerial good faith and consistency.

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### THAT UNHOLY ALLIANCE.

It has been well said that adversity makes strange bedfellows. This has been shown to be a very pertinent remark, if applied to political matters in the Province of Quebec. In 1872 an alliance was formed between the Rouges and the Ultramontanes, which resulted in the defeat of the late Sir George E. Cartier and several other noteworthy Conservatives, the Government having failed to comply with the demands made by Messrs. Trudel, Bellerose and others. Prior to this, *no terms of denunciation or vituperation had been found too strong for the latter's denunciation of the former.* That alliance lasted just so long as the Liberal Government which attained power in Ottawa was content to be obedient to the dictates of the gentlemen who controlled *Le Nouveau Monde*, of which that Liberal *par excellence*, M. Cleophas



Beausoleil, M.P. for Berthier, was one of the directors. Having been well provided for by his new friends and law partner, the Premier, Mr. Beausoleil remained with them, and is, it is said, *a coming member of the Quebec Government*, if it only lives long enough. The Castors, as they were called, sought, but unsuccessfully, to re-enter first the Conservative and then the Liberal party. Finally, the outcome of the North-west troubles offered to both them and the Liberals something like a *locus standi*, and, posing as so-called Nationalists, the combination contrived to carry a small majority of seats at the Provincial elections. It was not, however, until they had *managed to solidify themselves by methods in which the party manipulators are experts* that they were in a position to maintain their hold. The *Election courts have amply shown how, in part, this was accomplished*, and election contests still undecided may be expected to demonstrate how even *Ministers of the Crown, by promises and by threats, induced ignorant and unscrupulous electors to vote for their candidates*. The alliance was an unholy one in its inception, because that the principles— if principles they were—upon which they opposed each other were by mutual consent ignored; because the questions upon which they took a common stand were foreign to the controversy; and because the men who to-day are working in unison are only doing so because of their lust for place, power and emolument. Indeed, it may be remarked that in the distribution of offices, Mr. Mercier has to provide for the hangers-on of two cliques, who are needy as can be, and can only be kept within bounds by having their every demand satisfied. No wonder, then, that all ideas of economy and retrenchment have been cast to the winds, and that offices are being vacated and created in order to satisfy hungry office-seekers. *So long as the Nationals are maintained in power, so long will the public revenue be levied on, and the sooner they are displaced may needed economies and reforms be expected.*

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#### THE SESSIONAL CLERK ABUSE.

Unable at the time to find positions for many persons to whom or to whose friends they were under obligations, the National

Government, who had not only to provide for all nationalities and creeds, but for more than one school of political faith, opened the doors of the *Parliament House* to an immense number of strangers, and placed on the list of sessional employes no less than 126 clerks and messengers, besides fifteen charwomen. This was seventy-three employes more than the Conservatives employed in 1886, and ninety-nine more than in 1885. Even *L'Etendard* was constrained to come out in denunciation of this extravagance, and remarked :—

*"There is certainly reason to fear that Mr. Mercier and his friends are not now as strong on the retrenchment question, now that they are Ministers, as they were formerly."*

What can be said in justification of an extravagance like this?

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### TO THE VICTORS THE SPOILS.

The Liberal-National Government at Quebec has been remarkably liberal in its distributions of office and honours to its most abject slaves and faithful adherents, at least to such of them as could bring sufficient influence to bear upon them to make their case have its due weight. Not a few honest and deserving officials have been given their *congé*; but, in several instances, the Government have, unfortunately for themselves, succeeded in arousing a public sentiment which has compelled them, if not absolutely to stay their hand, at least to make some sort of reparation to the parties whom they were persecuting and depriving of their livelihood. One of the most flagrant cases of this kind is that of ex-Sheriff Bowen of Sherbrooke. The Government deemed it necessary to have more strength in that much despised Chamber, the Legislative Council. How was this to be obtained? Either of their own volition, or at the inspiration and instigation of some interested parties, they concluded that they would try to purchase the seat of Hon. Mr. Webb, who sat for the Division of Wellington. A candidate who was only too willing to sacrifice himself in the party interest and occupy another man's shoes was found in the person of Mr. Gilman. The question next arose, "What was to be done with Mr. Webb?" That was soon settled by the Government, who in the

*most heartless manner proceeded to remove Sheriff Bowen, of Sherbrooke, one of the most highly respected gentlemen in the Eastern Townships. Naturally, public indignation was aroused. From one end of the Province to the other—particularly in the Eastern Townships—so powerful a protest was made that the Government who had carried out the programme in its every detail, and had paid the price for its accomplishment, were compelled to re-consider their action. Mr. Gilman, however, was not ready to relinquish the seat he had gained, and, when remonstrated with by a deputation from Sherbrooke, unblushingly declared that his presence in the Legislative Council was a matter of life or death for the Government. Mr. Webb—the aforesaid Conservative—had been paid his price and could not be expected to give it up. Mr. Bowen had therefore—not because the Government recognized the justice of his claim, but because they were afraid of the outburst of popular sentiment—to be placed in a new office. This was found for him in the joint prothonotaryship at Sherbrooke, which is understood to have been promised to some one else, who will in consequence have to be placed in another remunerative office. Not a single one of the appointments connected with the call of Mr. Gilman to the Council can be justified on the ground of public-policy, and are but further indications of what the unscrupulous Mercier combination will do to provide for its friends and creatures and maintain itself in power.*

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#### MR. MERCIER'S J.P.'S.

And now to continue the record of political intrigue and criminality. The county of Lévis, of which constituency, among many others, Mr. Mercier and his friends were very much afraid, affords very interesting specimens of the ability shown in appointments to positions of honour. Mr. Mercier appointed twenty-seven full-fledged justices of the peace. As generally understood, such appointments should be made from amongst men blessed with at least a fair education, but in this instance what do we find? FOUR OF THESE PARTIES COULD NEITHER READ NOR WRITE. WELL QUALIFIED MEN, INDEED, ARE THESE TO BE “NATIONAL” REPRESENTATIVES OF JUSTICE in a period when

wholesale misconstruction and abuse of all law and justice is prevalent. Let us rather call them tools of a superficial Government and of the man at its head, who at one time professed himself to be so ardent an educationist.

#### A FEATURE OF THE \$5000 CASE.

But we approach a more serious subject when we hit upon the revocation of the commission of Benjamin Trudel, of Quebec, as a justice of the peace to pay *a debt of political spite*. It will be remembered that Mr. Trudel held the damning proof in his possession, in the shape of a letter, written by the present Prime Minister of Quebec, offering to discontinue disqualification proceedings against Hon. Mr. Mousseau for the sum of \$5000. Mr. Mercier tried hard, by fair means and foul, to get possession of that letter, but failed, and it is a fact that HE HAS NEVER DARED TO DENY ITS AUTHENTICITY.

#### BRIBING CONTRACTORS.

Another job, and one that is as odoriferous as it possibly can be, is that of the payment by the Mercier Government of sums of money claimed to be due by certain contractors, which had been thrown out by the Ross-Taillon Ministry as bearing the character of "extras" which had never been ordered, and which sums were paid by Messrs. Mercier & Co. without investigation, but merely as a matter of political expediency.

#### THE COMMERCIAL COMPANIES' TAX.

The substitution of Mr. Cleophas Beausoleil for Lacoste & Co. in the Banking and Commercial Companies' Tax cases, is a case of CONSIDERABLE NOTORIETY AND SCANDAL. By it the faithful partner of Mr. Mercier reaped the neat little sum of \$1500 by making a formal motion in court in each case, even after action in these cases had been suspended during appeal.

#### THE MONTREAL BOODLERS.

To show the criminality in which this government was born, and by which it now lives, there have only to be mentioned the Montreal "Boodle" cases. The city of Montreal asked for a

royal commission to investigate charges of "boodling" by aldermen. What did she get? Naught but a commission that was powerless to carry out the public will.

There are a number of instances in which especial privileges have been given by the Mercier Government to fishing and hunting clubs of exclusive fishing and hunting rights over certain territories. Is this what is asked by the people of the province? Do they desire that their material interests in this direction should be overlooked?

#### PAYING THE COMMERCIAL TAX TO MR. BEAUSOLEIL.

In Montreal there are Government officers, as also in Quebec, who alone are authorized to collect Provincial revenues, nevertheless, instead of the Commercial tax being paid to them, the same Mr. Beausoleil, friend, partner, and political associate of Mr. Mercier, is deputed by the "National" Premier to receive the proceeds of this tax for the Government. WHAT ARE OUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS FOR? Let us dispense with Mr. Beausoleil or them. Indirectly, taxation is high enough, goodness knows, without burdening us with such unnecessary expenditures as compelling us to pay large sums of money to friends of Ministers, merely for the privilege of allowing them to be the RECEIVERS AND TEMPORARY CUSTODIANS OF PUBLIC MONEYS.

#### TAXING LEGISLATION.

It is a fact that no ordinary legislation can pass through the house, at any rate, when conducted by a member of the opposition, without the exaction of what bears a strong resemblance to brokerage dues to a party standing high in favor with Ministers.

It is a fact that before he assumed the reins of office, Premier Mercier was continually objecting to even the slightest expenditure contracted by the Government in power, asserting that were he in their shoes, in order to save the poor people of the Province, he would ride in second-class cars and smoke French-Canadian tobacco. Do our Nationalist friends practise what Mr. Mercier preached? No! for Mr. Mercier has surpassed all his predecessors in lavish expenditure at the expense of the Pro-

vince. What about THOSE QUEBEC ENTERTAINMENTS OF HIS FOR WHICH THE PROVINCE PAID, where not only the guests but the servants were extensive champagne consumers?

Then there are THOSE "LITTLE EXCURSIONS," not only to Canadian points, but to the United States and even to Europe, which were taken by the Premier. Did Mr. Mercier pay for them? Mr. Mercier's complaint has been always POVERTY, POVERTY, POVERTY, UNTIL HE CAME TO ASSUME OFFICE, WHEN WHAT DO WE FIND? ONLY THAT OUT OF A SALARY OF \$5,000 PER ANNUM, HE WAS ENABLED, WITHIN THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS, TO PURCHASE A \$12,000 HOUSE, ON WHICH HE PAID A CHEQUE FOR \$8,000. Truly, this is *economy*. Mr. Mercier has evidently found the philosopher's stone. But mendacity is to be added to all this, and mendacity of the most barefaced kind. During the election in October last, Mr. Mercier stated in the most emphatic language that his boasted Provincial loan, had been effected at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. at 97. It was only recently the loan was effected at a much more disadvantageous rate, and the truth had to be almost forced out of the honorable gentleman's friends before it was admitted.

#### THE OTTAWA ELECTION.

It will be a marvellous record of bribery and corruption when the trial of the Ottawa County contested election case comes off and it will be conclusively shown that the *election was not as is alleged* carried through admiration of the Government, but by means which would shock the intelligence of any conscientious voter.

But unfortunately for this Province with Mr. Mercier, it is the old, old story of "Place a beggar on horse-back and he will ride to the devil."

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#### MORE SALARIES, MORE OFFICIALS.

Among Liberals the cry has been that the public offices were crowded with useless hangers-on, that the number of officials should be reduced, and that better salaries should be awarded those remaining, because in that event, better service might be



expected. But what has been done? The Government, as every one knows, has overcrowded every public office; but, as their friends have said, the salaries that have been paid have been very small, smaller, indeed, than the Conservatives had given. How does this agree with the hon. gentleman's pronouncement, "Reduce the number of officers, but pay them well." In every public office where changes have been effected—and they have been made wherever any possible pretext could be found—*no such reductions have been made, either in numbers or expense*, while very frequently an *additional public servant has been appointed*, without any regard to his experience or, indeed, his moral qualifications. Then, again, Mr. Mercier declared it to be his policy to reduce the number of Cabinet ministers. He retains the same number, with the addition of two members without portfolio, while according to semi-official declarations, there are one or two portfolios yet *in nubibus*.\*

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#### ACTING PREMIER TURCOTTE.

The career of this gentleman has been *peculiar*. Elected to the Legislature as a Conservative, he before long discovered substantial reasons for changing his mind and soon became noted for his devotion to the party whose cause he had espoused. *By him and by his vote as Speaker, the Joly Government maintained themselves in power against the majority of the House*, for it was only by their own individual votes as members that they secured a tie, and *without their own votes they were in a minority*. When, therefore, the Mercier régime came in it was but natural that Mr. Turcotte should have some consideration. But the position he occupies is an anomalous one. He became *Minister without portfolio*—a device for the purpose of *contravening all the professions and promises made by the Liberals in the past that they would not augment the number of Cabinet officers*. As acting premier, Mr. Turcotte has done his friends good service, even if his administration has not tended to promote the public welfare. It is notorious that while discharging the duties of his office, Mr. Turcotte has incurred *very considerable expenses*. *These will have to be paid by the public in some shape or form*. The question is, how will this be

done, and Mr. Turcotte be at the same time paid for his services without *contravening or violating the independence of Parliament Act*? Mr. Turcotte, it is well known, is not a rich man. He cannot afford to gratuitously devote his time and energies to official duties. There can be no question that he will be paid, if indeed, he has not already received his reward. However that may be, *the practice is an immoral one*. Mr. Turcotte cannot, as a member of the Government without portfolio, be legally paid. If the administration do not provide for his remuneration in an indirect, irregular and illegitimate manner, they will be forced to introduce during the session *a special bill of indemnification*, trusting to the majority of the House for its adoption. But *where, then, will the economy and retrenchment come in?* If the Government introduces such a bill, they cannot do otherwise than admit that they have *grossly deceived the public*; if they do not, it will be because the public revenue will be levied upon in an indirect manner, and if such be the practice in this case it is reasonable to ask, *How many more such cases are there?*

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#### MR. TURCOTTE'S SECRET.

Why was not Mr. Turcotte given a portfolio in the first instance? Because he dared not again try his chances with the electors of Three Rivers, and because the administration were pledged not to increase the number of Cabinet offices. *They therefore preferred to have a handy man of all work*, who would do what was required of him, and was *prepared to be rewarded either openly or covertly* so long as he was paid. But a policy like this is neither straightforward nor honest. The case of Mr. Turcotte is, without question *a direct violation of the law which requires that every Cabinet Minister before accepting Cabinet office shall go to his constituents for re-election*, and had MR. TURCOTTE NO CONFIDENCE IN THREE RIVERS, OR WAS HE CONVINCED THAT IT HAD NO CONFIDENCE IN HIM?

### THE MONTREAL FIRE MARSHALS.

The Liberals denounced the Fire Marshalships of Montreal as being useless and nothing more nor less than a means of *bestowing sinecures upon political hangers-on*. That they were sincere in their denunciation is sufficiently apparent by their summary dismissal of Messrs. Curran and Pelletier, gentlemen of whose individual, professional or official character there had been no complaint. They, however, immediately filled them by appointing *two well known electioneering campaigners*, Messrs. Barry and Poirier, the latter of whom made himself specially objectionable in connection with the unfortunate Riel agitation, and who, on account of the attitude he then assumed, has been displaced as one of the French translators of the House of Commons. Mr. Stephens, at that time member for Montreal West, and a large landed proprietor in that city, who ought to have known the utility of such an office, strongly denounced firemarshalships, and, time after time, moved for its abolition. The Liberals when in opposition voted and energetically coöperated with him; but when they reached the treasury benches they cast aside all their previous professions, and, *instead of abolishing the offices, conferred them upon two men who had rendered them signal service in carrying elections*.

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### MR. MERCIER'S ECONOMIES.

Among the economies which Mr. Mercier and his followers prated so much about was the reduction of the number of Cabinet Ministers, and in May, 1882, the then leader of the Opposition, remarking upon the proposal of the Conservative Government to reduce the number of Cabinet Ministers to six, expressed his regret that the number had not been reduced to five, saying that as in Ontario five Ministers were sufficient until a Minister of Education were appointed. It is true that we have only six Ministers at present, their number having been reduced by Mr. Chapleau, but, unless the Government have changed their minds since last session, they propose to increase the Cabinet to seven. By the Act of last year, the Cabinet was constituted as follows:

An Attorney-General, a Provincial Secretary, a Provincial Treasurer, a Commissioner of Crown Lands, a Commissioner of Agriculture and Colonization, and a Commissioner of Public Works. The Premier has, as he has announced, determined to have a Minister of Education,—so soon, it may be presumed, as political exigencies will warrant it—which would give seven portfolios. It is true that the Minister of Agriculture is also Minister of Public Works; but this the Ministers themselves have loudly declared is only a temporary arrangement, and we may therefore expect some one to blossom out as a full-fledged Minister of Public Works, so soon as the Government feel themselves in a position to *give further defiance to their professions of economy and retrenchment*. The Ministry of Education has not, so far, been created, but unless some change has come over the spirit of the dream of these boasting, self-assertive champions of extended education, one of the first acts of the Government will be to establish that office, which, it may be, will be devolved upon the member for Three Rivers, one of the *Ministers without portfolio, who, without salary or emolument,—if we are to believe the Ministerial statements—has been patriotically performing the duties of Premier*. A pertinent question here arises, “WHAT MUST BE THE PREMIER’S OPINION OF HIS ACTUAL COLLEAGUES, NOT ONE OF WHOM HE WAS PREPARED TO TRUST WITH THE ACTING PREMIERSHIP?” Does any one suppose that either Messrs. Ross or Turcotte are members of the Cabinet for nothing?

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#### WHAT WILL THEY DO WITH IT?

In his Budget speech, Mr. Treasurer Shehyn said that with the assistance of the loan the Government would be able to cover every possible claim upon the province and place its affairs upon an easy and satisfactory footing. This was before the judgments were given in the Commercial Tax cases. When those judgments were given the loan had not been negotiated, and *with so large a sum of money in certain and immediate prospect there was no necessity for borrowing so large an amount, and by so much adding to the annual burdens of the people*. It has been shown that many of

the claims to be satisfied are by no means of an urgent character. *What, it may again be enquired, is the Government going to do with the money?*

**TIME-KEEPING GALORE.**

It has long been notorious that the Quebec Court House contract has been a job by means of which the Government have been enabled to put money into the hands of friends who were disposed to give them financial assistance at election and other pressing times. There are contractors under the present *régime* who, as it were, own their Minister or Ministers, and can exact from them almost whatever they wish. Proofs of the correctness of this statement are manifest on every hand. The necessity of punctuality in connection with public or any other business need not be enlarged upon; but it could hardly be expected that necessity could ever have required the putting up and setting in operation *of thirty-six clocks in the Quebec Court House.* WHAT THESE CLOCKS WILL COST, THE PUBLIC WILL BEFORE LONG DISCOVER. EXPENSE IS NO OBJECT, the country PAYS IT—SO SAY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.